

Equal Employment Opportunity Policy Statement

FAS is proud to be an equal opportunity employer and provider. As the lead Agency for international affairs, I strongly support our Agency's dedication to civil rights and to creating an environment that embraces diversity, inclusion and fairness.

As we work to fulfill our mission of linking U.S. agriculture to the world, it is the policy of the Foreign Agriculture Service (FAS) to continue to provide equal opportunity employment to all employees and employment applicants, regardless of race, color, age, religion, gender, ethnicity, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation or identification, political ideology, or marital or family status. This policy relates to all employment decisions.

FAS will provide a work environment for its employees that is free of discrimination and that promotes equal employment opportunities and equitable treatment. Our Agency will not tolerate any form of harassment or retaliation. Equally important is the civil rights requirement of this Agency to ensure that no person is subjected to prohibited discrimination in Federally Assisted and Federally Conducted programs and services. Any applicant for or participant in programs and/or activities sponsored by FAS will be treated in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. FAS program managers and providers are to ensure that if discrimination occurs, prompt and appropriate action is taken to identify these conditions and to completely eliminate such biased factors from any and all FAS programs and services.

All of us—employees, managers and supervisors—share the responsibility to ensure that each individual is treated with dignity and respect. Any employee who feels that his or her rights have been violated under this policy should inform his or her immediate supervisor and/or the FAS Office of Civil Rights.

I know that all FAS employees will do their part to ensure the success of these guiding principles.

Suzanne Hale

Acting Administrator

Foreign Agricultural Service

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**Office of
Civil Rights**

**Prevention of
Harassment
Policy**

March 2009

Discriminatory Harassment

It is the Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) utmost duty to protect the rights of its employees from discriminatory harassment.

Harassment can be defined as slurs, derogatory remarks, obscene materials, and other verbal or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, religion or disability.

This conduct might have the purpose or effect of:

- creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.
- unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is also a form of harassment that may occur at any time. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical innuendoes in which submission to or rejection of such conduct results in a condition of employment, the basis for a personal decision; or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working environment.

Harassment in any form is inappropriate and unacceptable conduct, which will not be tolerated at FAS. It is illegal and undermines employee relationships, interferes with productivity, and threatens the mental, emotional and physical well-being of employees. FAS maintains a working environment free of harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, or disability. Harassment in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

With respect to conduct in the workplace, FAS managers and supervisors are responsible for acts of harassment in the workplace where the manager or supervisory employees knew or should have known of the conduct, unless immediate and appropriate corrective action was taken.

FAS may also be responsible to the acts of non-employees with respect to harassment of employees in the workplace (or vice versa), where supervisory employees, knew or should have known of the conduct and failed to take immediate corrective action. In such areas, FAS will consider the extent of the supervisor's control and any other legal responsibility, which the supervisor may have with respect to the conduct of such employees.



Consequences of Committing Harassment

Any employee—supervisory, non-supervisory, or managerial—engaging in harassment is subject to disciplinary action including demotion, suspension, and/or removal (Ref: DPM Chapter 751, Appendix A, Table of Disciplinary Penalties).

Non-Discrimination Statement

"The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."